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SURVIVORS' VOICES BREAKING THE SILENCE: OWNING THE PAST

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ABSTRACT

For the adult casualty of incest, the evolution from shrouded victim to unveiled survivor occurs in complex and creative ways. Often journal writing can be a means of exposing and exploring past abuse. The process of journal writing is special in that it allows the adult survivor to break the silence and shame imposed by the perpetrator while remaining essentially invisible and safe. The journal text is a private, reconstructed world in which the text's speaker is also its audience. The act of writing in a journal is essentially performative because of this audience. The present discussion relies on a textual analysis of selected published journal excerpts to explicate the implied audience embedded into survivor's journals. An examination of implied audience is meaningful to initially understand how survivors' thematize, contextualize, and work through past abuse.

SURVIVORS' VOICES BREAKING THE SILENCE: OWNING THE PAST

> As children, most of us had no voice, no choice and, therefore, no power. Power comes when an individual exercises choice about voicing her childhood experiences.

For the adult survivor of childhood sexual abuse, the journey toward breaking silence around abuse experiences is a long and dangerous crossing. Typically, children who are sexually traumatized are warned against disclosing anything about the incident(s). Warnings may take various forms from explicit threats to covert manipulations. Children learn to hide the trauma of sexual abuse through repressing, suppressing, depressing, splitting, lying, and/or pretending the trauma did not <u>really</u> happen.[1] Abused children depend on these conscious and unconscious strategies in order to "forget" the abuse until a point in time when they can "safely" remember. Some abused children grow up never to remember the trauma while others spend a lifetime reconstructing and working through the splinters of memory that surface. No two survivors have exactly the same experience in dealing with the pain of sexual abuse. Even when the abused child grows into adult, tatters of the abuser's warning may cling to the terrified individual.

One way that survivors voice their experiences is through journal writing. Hays suggests that "journal writing serves a variety of functions, including catharsis, increasing awareness, . . . and insight both at the moment and as a consequence of the disclosure."[2] Likewise, Baldwin has noted the benefit and uniqueness of journal writing,

> The journal is a way of connecting. The journal is a connection of the self with the self. The journal sets up an inner dichotomy so that one part may write and one part may read . . . One part may ask

> and one may answer, one may act and one may reflect, one may explore and one may comprehend the exploration.[3]

The present study is interested in examining journal writing by adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse. A dramatistic approach will inform the textual analysis of one published journal and several journal excerpts. Specifically, this discussion will explore two questions: Who is the implied audience in incest survivor journals? And, how is the relationship between a given survivor and her implied audience an empowering interaction? The following explicates some of the ways audience is constituted and how survivor's shift, contextualize, and alter audience to accommodate the owning of the abuse experience.

Visibility: Exposing the Abuse

The issue of visibility is particularly complex. Whether the survivor speaks, writes, or even thinks about the abuse, she feels exposed and violated.[4] When a survivor names the traumatic act(s) and names the perpetrator(s), she establishes a base out of which she is no longer invisible. Visibility can validate the abuse but it also tells the survivor that her sexual abuse really <u>did</u> happen. She can no longer avoid the pain of abuse.

While gaining visibility is a difficult issue for all survivors, it is especially painful for the vast majority of survivors who are victims of incest. When the incest survivor becomes visible she exposes the manner in which the ongoing bond of trust between her caretaker and her self was violated. This study relies on Blume's (1990) redefinition of incest:

> Given these realities about the <u>true</u> consequences of sexual violation of the dependency bond, <u>incest</u> can be seen as <u>the imposition of sexually inappropriate acts, or acts with sexual</u>

> overtones, by--or any use of a minor child to meet the sexual or sexual/emotional needs of--one or more persons who derive authority through ongoing emotional bonding with that child.[5]

The following study focuses on women who were sexually abused, or incested by family members and/or other non-strangers in a long-term, caretaking relationship with the child.

This study presents excerpts from published journals written by adult survivors of incest. The choice to rely on published materials is not without implications. While published materials are easily accessible, they have been altered to accommodate editing guidelines, clarity, and concern with grammar and language usage. Likewise, the physical appearance of the words on the page has been eliminated by typesetting texts for publication. It is likely that how the survivor writes, scribbles, types, or prints the words on the page of her journal reveals as much as what she writes. Also, there is question about what type of texts get published. It is unclear whether the following texts are representative of the majority of survivor's journal writing patterns. Since some texts may be published because of their dramatic, sensational, and/or shocking stories, other texts may be refused publication for not fitting into this mold, or some other arbitrary framework. It is interesting, too, that while publication of first-person survivor narratives are on the uprise, there are few published journals to be accessed.[6] To date there is only one full-length survivor journal published.[7] This journal reveals traumatic sexual abuse perpetrated by a "good friend of the family". Perhaps publishers suspect the journal or diary style of writing to be uninteresting or too personal. On the other hand, it is probable that, for a variety of reasons, few writers feel "safe" to attempt to publish their

own journals. Finally, it would seem that actual unpublished journal writings might be an appropriate choice for analysis. A goal of the present study is to provide an initial foundation for such upcoming research. Before analyzing actual unpublished journal writings, researchers must address the myriad of ethical concerns embedded in the use of such materials.[8]

Laura Donaforte's I Remembered Myself (1982) is the only published full-length survivor journal. This moving text details how Donaforte was teased, molested, and raped by a neighbor friend, named Bill Johnson. The journal describes her victimization and subsequent recovery from childhood sexual abuse. The journal also reveals the aftereffects of the abuse on Donaforte's relationships with her family, husband, and two daughters. While this text will provide the grist for the following analysis, the discussion will also include references to several brief excerpts from other texts. Rebirth of Power (1987), which is subtitled "Overcoming the Effects of Sexual Abuse Through the Experiences of Others", is an edited collection of writings by survivors. The volume contains two brief journal excerpts written by Norma Rothstein. In these, Rothstein describes being incested by her "warm, loving" grandfather. Finally, Inside Scars: Incest Recovery as Told by a Survivor and her Therapist (1987) is a first person narrative alternating between survivor and therapist. Sheila Sisk reveals how she was incested by her step-father, its effects, and the impact on her own mothering. While Inside Scars narratizes the recovery process, the text also contains several pages of journal entries. This text, unlike any of the others, includes a page of "actual appearing" journal writing. This page looks "hand written" and appears to have been ripped out of a three-ring binder notebook. All three of these texts use dated entries and are written by adult women recovering from childhood sexual abuse. However, before analyzing these texts it is useful to

examine the benefits of journal writing for the survivor and how performance studies scholars envision the form of the journal.

Journal Writing: Speaking and Writing for Survivors

For adult survivors of childhood incest, writing in a journal may be a useful way to break the silence surrounding incidents of abuse.[9] In the introduction to Rebirth of Power, Portwood suggests that

> as survivors we will not be silent or silenced any longer. For many of us, writing--poems, journal entries, stories, fables, sent and unsent letters--has been the saving grace. When spoken words were too frightening, pen and paper became our tongues. When our psyches protected us from our memories, our poems and dream journals spoke them symbolically for us. Sometimes our writings recorded our healing process; sometimes they actually created the process and the means.[10]

Journal writing is a communication channel that creates and perpetuates its own unique tensions. The process of journal writing is special in that it allows the adult survivor to break the silence of abuse while remaining essentially invisible. Writing in a private journal may provide the survivor a place to begin to deal with her abuse while maintaining invisibility from external listeners. On the other hand, this "invisibility" may be a chimera since the very act of writing becomes a permanent record of the secrets and shame of incest. Speaking aloud forces immediate visibility although it may be easier to deny; writing cloakes the survivor from external listeners although it saves the experience in black and white. While these tensions present several evocative issues, this discussion will focus on concerns germane to the process of coming to voice within the written word.

The therapeutic uses of journaling for the adult survivor result in an overriding concern: writing creates a dichotomy between exposing and hiding the experience. It allows the survivor to hide from an external listener, perpetrator, or "other" while exposing the experience to the self and thereby paving the way for a validation of the past. Journaling is a re/calling, re/working, re/knowing, and re/creating of the abuse, only this time the survivor is not necessarily a powerless victim as in the past. The more the incest survivor re/members the past trauma, the more she "owns" it.[11] Owning allows the survivor to incorporate the abuse as "hers" and not only as something that was done to her. As the abuse becomes the survivor's possession she is no longer an emotional object as the abuser's possession. A premise of this study is that owning is a necessary step in working through abuse.

In written telling, some of the fear imposed by the perpetrator may dissipate, thereby allowing the survivor a greater ability to claim ownership of her past. Each telling makes it even more hers, even more real, even more an event over which she can now exert power. As previously stated, it is crucial to keep in mind that writing is different than talking about the abuse. Both types of voicing have different strategies, uses, and functions. Talking is public and part of a constructed exterior world. Journal writing is private and part of a reconstructed interior world. It is in this very reconstruction that a journal writer may find the ultimate safety. Within the survivor's interior world, fictive and nonfictive depictions of reality collide. At its best, journaling is a re/shaping of powerless victim into powerful survivor. At its most complex, journaling exposes the experience of incestuous, traumatic abuse of the self to the self.

Journal Writing: A Performance Studies Approach

The evolution from shrouded victim to unveiled survivor occurs for journal writers in complex and creative ways. In order to unravel the intricate relationship between survivor and her process of journaling, it is beneficial to examine the unique role of the journal writer. One useful place to find out about the intricies of journal writing is from performance studies scholars and critics.[12] While a journal is often labeled "nonfiction literature", survivor's journals may be viewed as specialized illustrations of reconstructed texts--a merger of both fictive and nonfictive genres.[13] Journaling emphasizes the sequential recreation of the past while detailing the relationship of survivor to other individuals in her past and present. According to Long, Hudson, and Jeffrey:

> authors of diaries, letters, and autobiographies create and develop a direct relationship with their audience,. . .A diary, for many writers, serves the function of an alter ego--it operates as a sounding board <u>for</u> the self in communion <u>with</u> the self. A diarist speaks in the first person and reveals his or her personal perceptions and emotions. The immediate audience in the diary is the writer's "other" self, or alter-ego.[14]

In journals, a survivor's voice is in communion with her other <u>selves</u> since there may be several parts of self that are engaged within the written word. It is this engagement of self with self that is empowering.

Journal entries are remarkable in that the speaker <u>in</u> the text is also the speaker <u>of</u> the text. Frequently, there is a collision or merger between the texts' speaker and the texts' author. Also, while journals are assumed to be written to the writer's self, there may be multiple selves or even other audiences embedded in or implied by the text. These other audiences may be

external or internal with relation to the writer.

> The audience may be <u>in</u> the work. When the persona is engaged in meditation, he is, obviously, speaking to an audience in the work. When he is engaged in communication, he may be speaking to another person or to a group of people who exist only within the work itself. This audience shall be called a "fictive audience." But a speaker--either the persona or the implied author--may also be speaking to a real audience, a group of readers, say, who may exist outside the structure of the work.[15]

The survivor communicates about and meditates on her experiences. The term "implied audience" is intended to encompass a range of possible fictive and nonfictive audiences. An audience may be suggested by explicit and/or implicit textual cues. Answering the question "to whom is the speaker speaking" can shed light on every other question about the text. This illumination is critical. Envisioning the intricities of the implied audience helps in understanding the survivor and the complexity of her experiences.

The concept of an implied audience is informed by a dramatistic approach. Dramatism, a literary critical method of analysis frequently used by performance studies scholars, is useful for understanding the "roles" and "selves" that make up the survivor's text.[16] Dramatism holds that each text, whether a letter, selection of prose fiction, or journal entry, contains a speaker(s) communicating with an other about a topic at a given place and time for certain reasons. The analysis of text as minidrama answers the questions: Who is speaking? To whom? About what? When and where? How are they speaking? Why? By answering dramatistic questions about a text it is possible to uncover the dramatic situations inherent within the world that the text is seeking to evoke.[17]

An audience typology is a useful framework when examining how survivor's constitute and contextualize implied audiences for their journals. No matter what the relationship between speaker and audience, the text may specify this audience or leave distinct characteristics unspecified. It is more useful to identify audiences in terms of placement, where they are located in relation to the speaker. Audiences may be perceived as moving on a continuum from highly nonfictional ("real") and existing outside the text to almost exclusively fictional ("created") and existing primarily within the text and, often, within the speaker. These stances are not fixed or mutually exclusive. Rather, the implied audience may move back and forth between nonfictional and fictional dimensions. Likewise, depending on who the audience is, they may exist outside and inside the text simultaneously. Finally, there may be multiple audiences suggested within a given journal. There are three audience clusters typically implied by the previously mentioned survivor's journals. They are: an "outside audience", an "inside audience", and an "inner audience". Textual analysis of journal excerpts will serve to elaborate each of these audience positions and the dynamics between speaker and audience.

Outside Audience: Reader of the Journal

When a journal directly addresses a living person or possible reader of the text this "other" becomes a nonfictive implied audience. This audience "really" exists, is directly indicated by the text, is outside of the constructed world of the text, and may or may not be specified. However, the reader, or outside audience, is <u>not</u> usually a major actor in the speaker's constructed textual world. Some journal writers speak directly to someone who might actually have suggested the writing and/or who may be an expected reader of this text. The outside audience may include: counselor, religious leader,

friend, teacher, or parent. Likewise, if the survivor knows another person will read the journal then this outside audience will always be known by the speaker. While the speaker may have moments of "forgetting" the outside audience, it is more likely that this knowledge shapes the manner in which the speaker tells her story.

Donaforte's speaker in her journal frequently sounds conscious of the exterior other and even directly addresses us with her remarks and asides. The journal begins with a forward in which she speaks to her readers in the familiar second person:

> I guess I've got to trust you. I feel good about the growth this book describes. Someone else's misunderstanding won't destroy me. Anyway you're a person like me, with your own pride and shame, hopes and worries. You may find in my writing something of yourself . . . And so you will survive my journal. I wish it were prettier. More entertaining. Something you could read on your breaks at work, to kind of relax with . . . May you find here joy, hope, ideas and support for your own healing![18]

She is not simply aware of her outside audience but she writes with us in mind, frequently inserting humorous and/or apologetic commentary. Often Donaforte interrupts her speaker's voice to directly speak to the reader, especially when the reader is assumed as critical. In the 10/6/81 entry, she talks about the Sunday that Bill Johnson attacked her:

> Barbara is off taking her kids to Sunday School. That always brought a bitter twist to my smile, knowing he did it while his family was worshipping. God is often implicated in these kinds of crimes. I ought to explain that, but I won't. Reject it if it sounds wrong to you. But believe me, I believe in the God Inside,

my Guide. It's just the World's twist on God that bugs me.[19]

In this entry the speaker seems less interested in justifying than in explaining her thoughts about God and society to us as reader. She wants us to understand her perspective and outlook.

The speaker who addresses her outside audience often does so abruptly, as in the following:

> Suddenly I become concerned that you realize that I am more than this journal shows. Is it apparent what a balanced and many-faceted person I am? Do you know about my wry sense of humor? My love of splitting wood or galloping on a horse? My political work? Do you know what a good mother I am? How creative and giving and competent I am as a nurse, even to male patients?[20]

Of course this anxious query may not be at all abrupt for the speaker, just the reader. The reader has just finished an emotional entry about the speaker's relationship with her mother. It is difficult to read this series of questions without forming answers which will never be heard.

The speaker sometimes uses her sarcasm and wry wit with her audience as a way to pull away from pain. In the 12/4/81 entry, the speaker describes confronting her mother about being raped by Bill Johnson, to which her mother replies that she made it up. Quite abruptly the speaker addressed her reader:

> This book will be published and sell a million copies, right? By now as you read this far you're just roaring with laughter, right? Oh well, maybe my delusions of grandeur will surprise themselves by coming true.[21]

These tag questions acknowledge the reader and place some distance between the speaker and the emotionally charged prior subject matter. With survivor's who

know their journals are to be read, the speakers' knowledge of the reader's presence influences the shape of the constructed textual world.

Inside Audience: Actor in the Journal

Like the outside audience, the inside audience may be a reflection of a living person who "really" exists and may be directly indicated by the text. However, this audience is usually somewhat specified and is typically outside and inside of the text's constructed world. This simultaneous existence allows the speaker to interact with the inside audience without the knowledge of this audience. This "safe world" of the journal may free up the speaker since the inside audience will not read the text. The speaker addresses characters within the created world of the journal as she explains, describes, tells, and shows what happened in the past up to the present. The inside audience <u>is</u> an actor within the speaker's constructed world and frequently an implied listener to the interaction. The inside audience may include: parent, sibling, family members, perpetrator, spouse, friend, children. This audience is almost exclusively addressed by the speaker in created dialogues.

Donaforte's speaker talks to several inside audiences at different times. It is not always easy to distinguish between the inside audience and characters or actors within the text's world. Within Donaforte's journal there are two relational modes between characters and speaker. They are: when characters are both actor and audience of the interaction, and when characters are actors to the speakers' inner audience. This dual function of scripted characters is best illuminated by turning to several excerpts detailing interactions between speaker and her parents as well as speaker and perpetrator.

<u>Character as Actor and Audience</u>

In Donaforte's journal, some characters take on the role of both actor

within the text's world and audience to the speaker. For the most part this dual role is embedded in several scripted interactions between speaker and parents. In these instances, the parents are performers and implied audience within dialogues. In the following excerpt the speaker pleads with her mother for love and understanding.

> I need my mommy! Mommy, where are you? Will you be all right? I've got to make you OK or I'll fall apart. God damn it Mommy I need you . . . You taught me how to be raped. And you did that without ever telling me there was such a thing as rape to be wary of. As long as I didn't take candy or car rides from strangers I'd be OK. But you were wrong, Mom.
>
> "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." OK, so we're silent . . . I silently chew up my lunch and I silently retch and spit it out on the playground.[22]

The author of this interaction leaves the impression that the speaker actually imagines addressing her mother. And, later in the same entry, the speaker tries to tell her mother about the abuse. She asks for protection from her mother. In this excerpt the mother is an actor as well as an imagined listener.

> "Mom, I was just over at Barbara and Bill's, you know."
>
> "Mm hm."
>
> "He sometimes. Um. I was. Um." I was nasty, Mommy. I took off my pants. I got in trouble, Mommy. "Oh, never mind."[23]

In this dialogue the mother does not say much but is still an imagined listener to the speaker's struggle to confess the shame and pain of the abuse. Also, the speaker is her own audience to the interaction, as she thinks about

what she would have liked to have said to her mother.

One of the most illuminating interactions depicting the dual role of character as actor and audience is in the 11/24/81 entry. In this, the speaker talks to mom and dad from her child sense of self and there is a dialectic established between all three of these characters as actors. The audience alternates between the speaker's impression of her parents, the vision of speaker as hurt, needy child, and the speaker's adult self. The complete entry is included for the purpose of illustration.

> ** Mommy, I just hurt my feelings. Will you hold me on your heart for the rest of the day?
>
> Oh Laura-la, you're a funny girl. But I'm too busy now to hold you. Have you set the table for dinner?
>
> Please mommy. You're always too busy.
>
> Now, Laura, that's no way to talk. If you can't be pleasant to have around you'll just have to go to your room.
>
> ** Daddy, I fell down and bumped my head. Can you make it all better?
>
> Uh-oh! Did you hurt the floor? Your head's pretty hard to be hitting the floor, you know. Let's go see where you fell. There might be a crack in the floor!
>
> Daddy, really, my head needs a kiss. Why don't you ever say you're sorry?
>
> Now, Laura, that's no way to talk. Be a big girl now. Uh-ohh! What's that I see? Are you going to cry? Come on, let's see you squeeze a tear out of the inside corner of your left eye. Can you do it? What's that I see? No, I don't think she can do it, Momma![24]

In this entry the speaker's adult self is embedded within the scripted text. She tries to release anger and strives to understand the childhood communication dynamics within her family. The implied audience switches from parents as insensitive listeners to needy child self to frustrated adult self.

There are also several journal entries that feature Bill Johnson (the perpetrator) and assume he is both character in and audience of the interaction. The following excerpt from the 11/4/81 entry is illustrative of the way that the speaker contextualizes Bill's dual role. In this the speaker recounts a past interaction with her rapist.

> After that rape scene I didn't go over to see Bill anymore. It was a few months before he had a chance to see me again.
>
> Then Mom and Dad left him babysitting at our house one night. . . He told me to come sit with him for a while.
>
> "No, I have to go to my room."
>
> "You don't have to go to bed yet! Come sit with me."
>
> "I don't want to."
>
> . . .
>
> "Bill, is it true girls have babies when boys touch them? You know, like you did to me?
>
> He jumped out of the couch and came swinging over to me on his crutches. I started to back away. He grabbed my shoulder and glared at me angrily. "You haven't been talking to anyone, have you?
>
> "No, no, of course not. You told me not to!"
>
> "How'd you get such a stupid idea then?"
>
> "Some girls at school were talking, is all. They always talk

about nasty stuff."

"You didn't talk to your mother? You'd better not ever tell your parents because...because they won't understand and they'll hate you and it's none of their business anyway. You hear me?" A pinch and a shake and I am free. He never got to touch me that night.[25]

Bill ends up being both an actor and an audience of the dialogue. When he is audience, he is perceived by the speaker as threatening. She tries to pacify him by minimizing her questions and assuring him she hasn't told her mother. Additionally, the speaker is an implied audience since she presents the interaction for her own benefit. Her adult self is able to reflect on these past events, as shown during the introspective last line.

Character as Actor to Speaker's Inner Audience

Often characters within the created textual world do not operate as audience but as actors. In this case family members, perpetrator, friends and other characters are the subject of the speaker's talking. They are described, talked about, and sometimes even spoken to but they are not the audience of the interaction. In the following lines the speaker is talking about her parents but the implied audience is actually various parts of her inner sense self.

If my father was different now from how I experienced him twenty years ago, I would know my book is full of lies. I'd hate to take it back because it made a damn good story, but I'd take it back.

But so help me, before anyone who can bear to hear, I am not crazy. I am not malicious. I am not going to hide. I will not take it back.

I love you, Dad, can't you hear me? I love you and I'm sorry you're so hurt by me and I'll always love you.

Mother, are you there?[26]

In this the speaker shows her affirming self, witty self, justified self, and tender, loving self. The audience for this self-reflexive monologue is within the speaker. She may initially wonder if her perceptions are wrong, then push out to address the world and, finally, pull back to address her still vulnerable inner self. She is answering her self.

Bill Johnson is also a character to the speaker's inner audience. While through much of the journal the speaker addresses her perpetrator as both actor and audience, there are occasions when he is only an actor. In the following passage the speaker retells how she phoned Johnson in order to get Randi Johnson's (Bill's daughter) phone number. She wants to get Randi's number in order to call her, tell her about her father as perpetrator, and possibly protect Randi's young children from their grandfather.

> "My name is Laura." I pictured the name spelled L-o-r-a, as if my mind's alteration would provide a disguise.
>
> "Uh-huh..." I could hear a puzzlement in his voice.
>
> "Laura Donaforte."
>
> "Well, sure, but she's right here in town."
>
> "You want to give me her phone number then?"
>
> "Alrighty."
>
> This clown must be joking with me. He's a fool not to recognize my name. He got a certified letter from Laura Donaforte five years ago. Who does he think I am, wanting his daughter's phone number? I'll call it and find the police. They'll get me on fraud. No, that's impossible. There'll be a rapist at the end of the phone number.

"Here she be!--772-4865."

"Thanks a lot. Byebye now."

"Bye."

You chicken! You missed your chance to tell off Bill Johnson. You never will do it, you know.

Oh shut up! That was great! You are so gutsy, Laura! Whoo-ee! You'd make a great actress!

I'll wait till the rates are down to call this number. Shaw will be home then anyway.

No, you'd better call now, you cheapskate. You might lose your nerve. Anyway, you're more in touch with your own strength and feelings when Shaw's not around. Call her now, Laura. It's OK.

Well, I did. And I sure am glad.[27]

In this excerpt Johnson is not the implied audience rather that role is adopted by the speaker. She comments, explains, argues, and is critical of the interaction of self with Johnson. This self-directed commentary may be heard in the asides and back-and-forth repartee between speaker and critical self, confused self, and adult self. The speaker's inner self is the true audience of the exchange. The notion of speaker's self as implied audience is elaborated upon in the upcoming section on "Inner Audience".

Characters become actors for a merged audience of the speaker and journal writer. When this happens the writer is able to address an imagined vision of the character and thereby work through issues and process past events. The merger between speaker and writer is, perhaps, most creatively presented when she relies in her inner audience.

Inner Audience: Selves within the Speaker

The inner audience exists within the constructed world of the text. This

audience is not a living person who "really" exists. The inner audience is within the speaker's imagination, psyche, or inner self. This other may be thought of as an adaptation of the "fictive audience" since this audience exists primarily within the reconstructed world of the text and the interior world of the speaker. Usually, the inner audience is composed of various parts of the speaker's self which may include: controlling self, angry self, protecting self, fearful self, innocent self, etc. During certain moments of the journal story, these parts of the self may be directly and/or indirectly addressed by the speaker. Similar to the inside audience, this audience is often addressed by the speaker in created dialogues. The speaker in Donaforte's journal names her inner implied audience, while journal excerpts written by Sisk and Rothstein address an unnamed inner implied audience. The audience of the latter texts is, primarily, an adult self to whom both speaker's describe and justify past and present feelings and thoughts. This adult inner audience will be examined before turning to Donaforte's named audiences.

Adult Self

In Inside Scars, Sisk includes over a dozen excerpts from her journal. In these the speaker seems to be addressing another, adult part of the self. The speaker retells daily events to her adult self which becomes the implied audience, as in the following,

> I stand in front of the mirror, putting on make-up and combing my hair. But I become afraid when I see his reflection in the mirror. I turn quickly, but he's not there. My flashbacks continue to recreate for me the traumatic events of my childhood.
>
> I hear a noise in the night and sit straight up in bed, expecting

to see him. But he's not there. It's only the noise of my two-year-old as she tosses in her bed in the other room.

. . .

But he continues to peer at me, touch me, and frighten me through the memories.

For the abuse is still very much alive and actively destructive within me. I feel hurt, degraded, humiliated and gross. And I can't make these feelings go away.[28]

The audience of this excerpt hears about how the speaker gets through a day and night while remembering the abuse. This speaker acts as a narrator of what is going on within the speaker and, to a great extent, within the writer. The merger between speaker and writer is no where more evident than in Sisk's "actual appearing" entry. In this, words are written together and even trail off the edge of the page, curving onto the margins. The entry, written three weeks after beginning therapy, begins explosively with "I hate me, I want to die. . ."[29] While it is certainly the speaker in the text emoting these words, the writer of the text shows her feelings by the manner in which she writes down the words. Later, the speaker describes feelings of guilt surrounding the abuse and fear about the impact of the abuse on her mothering, as in the following,

July 25

I can't stop crying. Why can't I pull it together? I miss my girls. Life seems like one hurt after another.

August 1

I'm so tired, physically and emotionally, but I can't fall asleep. I've had about four hours of sleep in the past seventy-two

> hours. I find myself wandering aimlessly through the house, pausing for a moment in the girls' empty rooms. Even though I know the girls are in foster care, inside I feel like they've died. I feel so alone, so unneeded, so guilty. It's the same kind of emptiness I felt when my sister died. It seems that all I can think about is what I didn't do for them. I hurt.[30]

The speaker talks to an unnamed, adult inner self. This sense of inner self is almost identical to the implied audience in Rothstein's journal writing. In it she, too, narratizes events.

> I can't shake the feeling that I am damaged. I have somehow managed to lead a normal life but it was something that happened to me, not something that I had control over.
>
> . . .
>
> There is always the need to be careful, not reveal myself. On guard constantly. If you have to keep one secret, you have to keep everything secret. Even from yourself--no wonder I do not know myself. Hide, hide, hide. High necks, long sleeves, avoid community dressing rooms, take quick showers, never baths. Never expose yourself, your body might reveal your secret.[31]

Certainly the speaker explores feelings but the audience of this text is within her. The implied audience is her adult self who is working through the past abuse and its effects. Both Sisk and Rothstein rely on speakers who address an adult inner audience.[32] By contrast, Donaforte's speaker addresses different parts of her inner audience by name.

Controller

In Donaforte's journal the speaker refers to five distinctly individual, named parts of the inner self. While it is unclear whether other survivor

journal writers adopt the practice of "naming", the technique is useful as a way of differentiating between the roles of the inner implied audience. Each of these named parts represents a cluster of feelings that the speaker explores within herself. The first of these inner audiences is a critical inner self the speaker calls the "controller". There are many instances of the speaker addressing the controller. This inner audience is introduced in the 10/29/81 entry,

> I constantly have to fight against this Controller part of myself. The Controller wants to direct and restrict my thoughts, feelings and actions.
>
> "Be reasonable, Laura. That's not fair." "Sexual feelings, huh? Shaw's waiting, you know." Etcetera.
>
> Well, Controller, your one job is to keep me from going wild and hysterical. You tell me if I'm hurting anyone unnecessarily or destroying my own self. Otherwise keep your hands off my feelings! Unless you want to comfort and reassure me.[33]

This controlling part of self also analyzes the speaker's feelings, especially feelings of pleasure. In the following passage the speaker is in bed with her husband, Shaw, and is beginning to feel sexually excited.

> "Aha! What's happening here? Do you have to pee? Is that it? Maybe you want to make love with Shaw! No? Aw come on. You don't even want to kiss him? Well gee, these are sexual feelings you have! Use 'em or lose 'em!"
>
> So I lose them.
>
> Look, Controller, being full and open and tingling is not dangerous. Not when I'm in my own bed with my best friend Shaw. So

you're not on duty yet! Go take a nap or something. I'll tell you when I need you. Meanwhile I don't want to hear any muttering out of you.[34]

The Controller inhibits the speaker but also serves as an audience to the speaker's frustration, insecurity, and internalized self-victimizer. Soon after the previous entry the speaker draws a connection between the Controller and her perpetrator.

"Oh! Guess what? Controller's body looks just like Bill Johnson's!"

"Get out of here, Controller!"

"You're just flirting with me, Laura! Look at you touching yourself that way. You don't want me to leave."[35]

The speaker not only talks about the Controller, to her imagined readers, but talks to the Controller, within her self. Throughout Donaforte's journal, self-talk allows the speaker to explore emotionally charged feelings and memories of her abuse.

Comforter

The speaker experiments with learning how to care for herself as she addresses the comforting implied audience. This part of the inner self is first named "Guide-Mother" and is initially discovered during a guided fantasy.[36] The speaker soon changes the name to "Comforter" as this is descriptive of this self's role. It is interesting that there are several places throughout the journal that reflect conflict between Controller and Comforter, as in the following.

Controller and Comforter talked a lot, with Comforter helping me to untwist the things Controller said. Like I asked Controller if I was going to become able to receive comfort and he said I didn't

> deserve it. Comforter told him to answer the question, not give a judgment. He got really uncomfortable, sort of clowning around and writhing. He just couldn't stand up to her serene, confident strength and her incisive humor.
>
> I asked Comforter how I could contact her in the future. Apparently she wouldn't answer me with Controller there because she laughingly said, "Tell that jerk to get lost!" And I did! I was able to not be nice! Boy, he left quick too, like he was relieved. I never did ask Comforter again how I could contact her, but it came to me that I need to lose my inhibitions enough to say, "I need you, Comforter!"[37]

In this, the speaker is retelling an interaction between her inner selves. It appears that she is alternately addressing her adult self, Comforter, and Controller as implied audience.

Permissa and Ellen

Occasionally the speaker talks to an implied audience of her self as a young child. There are two named inner selves to whom she speaks, "Permissa" and "Ellen". Permissa is the speaker's fun loving sense of self.

> She's twelve years old and she is the happiest tomboy ever known. She's thin and freckled and her hair is in two long braids. She's another one of my people inside, like Comforter and Controller. She's the one who calls me cheapskate so lovingly.[38]

This self gives the speaker permission to play, enjoy life and be free. Ellen is a younger child self. She is referred to as being a terrified 6-year-old child. She is the part of the self stuck back in the traumatic afternoon of the rape. This inner audience allows the speaker to explore feelings of

compassion for the fearful, scared, and ashamed Ellen. The following dialogue reveals this inner/victim self.

"Ellen, how are you doing?"

"You know how I'm doing. Why don't you quit bothering me?"

"Because I care about you. Are you angry?"

"Just leave me alone." Her body seems lumpy, like an old balloon that's losing air.

"Ellen, you need your mommy. Where is your mommy?"

"She's next door at the house."

Oh God, poor child. Next door is twenty four years away. "I want to give you a hug, Ellen."

The toilet seat rattles under her and her eyes scramble about the bathroom seeking the dark and tiny spots.

"Are you scared, Ellen? Poor kid. I wish you didn't have to be so scared."

"I'm not scared. Get out of here!"

. . .

"Ellen, I want to come into the bathroom with you and put my arms around you."

"I don't want to! Mommy..." Her voice trembles away.[39]

When the speaker includes narrative commentary, as in the final tag sentence, she is reflecting on her own inner process of understanding the abuse. The speaker can begin to work through the past incest by interacting with the part of self that remembers the fear and pain of the assault. In this way the act of writing becomes not only a catharsis but a creative reworking of the past abuse.

Protector

Finally, Donaforte's speaker addresses an inner audience who is a protecting force. The speaker refers to this paternal sense of self as her "Protector". He is the "good dad"--always present to the needs of the speaker. The following excerpt shows the speaker describing this audience.

> I have a pretty clear, strong father part inside myself. It took getting battered by my husband and raped by a date before I realized I needed my father within or I'd be a victim all my life. But I have now a wonderful, strong, loving, competent father inside.
>
> I'm going to name him Protector. He's the one who is big and strong yet soft to touch. He dresses in loose but neat clothing. He teaches me how to defend myself. He helps me find the boundaries of my self, because he knows I can do most anything.[40]

One entry toward the end of the journal reveals the speaker addressing both Protector and Comforter. In this, she slowly acknowledges she was raped by Bill Johnson.

> It's not OK for me to cut off the pain when I can't do anything about it?
>
> "But I can do something about the pain now," someone else inside says.
>
> What can I do about a painful reality?
>
> "Now it doesn't have to hurt, it doesn't have to happen anymore."
>
> That was Protector! Hello!
>
> Protector, why does it feel like a knife is twisting inside my vagina whenever I see a child in pain? Other people may feel a griping sensation in their gut, but I've never heard of anyone else who feels sympathetic pain in their vagina.

> Somebody tell me! Somebody tell me, please! I was all alone then when he raped me!
>
> Raped me? Tried to rape me? Did he rape me? Somebody should have been with me! I need somebody to tell me what happened.
>
> "Why do I need that?"
>
> I don't know, but I don't want to have been so all alone. I want to know. I want to be OK now. I want to get this pain all over with. I want to know I remembered the whole thing so I can forget about it. Come on, Comforter! Protector? Which of you was there? Why didn't you stop him? Why did you leave me alone?[41]

The speaker enacts a range of emotions as she struggles to comprehend being not only molested but raped. In this section the implied audience alternates between the comforting and the protecting parts of self. The Protector as audience is a rescurer of the speaker, he allows her to experiment with feelings of safety.

Conclusions

Throughout journal excerpts, writers find complex and creative ways to break the silence of sexual abuse. One way is through the relationship between the text's speaker and her implied audience. This relationship allows the speaker to address outside listeners as well as many different parts of herself. Frequently, speakers address highly specified listeners, including an outside audience (external reader), inside audience (simultaneously existing characters), and inner audiences (reflections of inner selves). These audience modalities are not discrete, separate entities but fluid, interwoven roles to whom the speaker addresses her story. The more the survivor tells her story the more it becomes her acquisition, her property, and her experience rather than the perpetrator's abuse of her.

Each time a survivor tells her story it becomes an event over which she can begin to exercise control. The past will not be changed but the future is open to interpretation. Journal writing, then, is a way of revealing past abuse to present and imagined selves. Exposing the abuse is rarely easy, comfortable or safe, but journaling may provide the least risk to the survivor.

This study does not lead smoothly into a final conclusion. Rather, the study points to a myriad of questions for readers of survivor's journals and practitioners of literary critical analysis of such materials. It is useful to list some of the implications for further research within the area of journal writing, personal stories by survivors, and performance practice. Some areas for further research are indicated below.

(1) What is the relationship between the journal writer and journal speaker?

(2) What is limited, changed, or altered when a writer knows there will be an external reader?

(3) What is edited out of journal excerpts? And, why?

(4) What are the assumptions about journal writing in terms of style, repetition, self-disclosure, appropriateness?

(5) What critical questions are useful when analyzing journals versus other genres?

(6) What are the differences between published (edited) and unpublished (unedited) survivor journals?

(7) What are the similarities and differences between journal writings, memoirs and first person narratives?

(8) How do texts of journals translate from page to stage? And, should

they be performed?

(9) What are the feminist implications of appropriating survivor's texts for performance? And, how do survivor's texts resist appropriation?

(10) What are the implications for ethical responsibility to a survivor's text in performance?

(11) How can survivor's journal writings be performed without "abusing" the audience or "traumatizing" the performer?

(12) What happens when survivor's perform their own texts?

(13) Is there a survivor "aesthetic"?

These questions, while not inclusive, suggest new directions for research and examination. For sexual abuse victims to move to survivors, they need to feel safe to voice the pain and reality of their trauma. As a society it is our responsibility to make the world a place where abuse, incest, and family violence are not the norm. For it is not only survivors who must break the silence. We are all survivors of the society that accepts, valorizes and ignores family violence. We are all responsible for breaking the silence.

NOTES

1. See, e.g., Blume, 75-107, for an illuminating overview of the many coping strategies and cognitive aftereffects (amnesia, blocking out a period of time, denial, depersonalization/splitting, fantasies, multiple personality disorder, emotional shutdown, hysterical symptoms, minimizing/rationalizing, psychic numbing, repression, etc.) common to incest survivors.

2. See, Hays, 128.

3. See, Baldwin, xiv, 4.

4. Although both boys and girls are victims of sexual abuse, this discussion focuses on women who were abused as girls.

5. See, Blume, 4. Within the focus of this research, it is essential to remember that the incest perpetrator "may be a father, mother, stepparent (or parent's lover), grandmother, grandfather, uncle, aunt, cousin, babysitter, doctor, dentist, teacher, principal, priest, minister, rabbi, foster parent, neighbor, family friend, coach, therapist, worker in a residential facility, nurse, or anyone else in long-term contact with the child. In the life of a child, six months is a long time." (Blume, 3)

6. During the past decade there have been a flush of books written by childhood sexual abuse survivors. Fictionalized accounts of abuse have entered literary circles, see, e.g., Angelou; Walker. The first-person, story form of narrative is also especially popular. Most of these narratives deal with father-daughter incest see, e.g., Armstrong; Bass and Davis; Brady; Camille; Morris; Wisechild. There are also several first-person narratives which tackle special abuse issues, such as sexual abuse by a mother-perpetrator, see, e.g., Evert and Bijkerk; McNaron and Yarrow; ritual abuse, see, e.g., Hollingsworth; Spencer; multiple personalities (a related, residual effect of some extreme cases of sexual abuse), see, e.g., Bliss; Chase;

Sizemore; and attack or murder of perpetrator by daughter-victim, see, e.g., Crane. A useful place for surveying these materials is Healing: A Catalogue. This is a mail order book catalogue that specializes in "resources on intimate violence".

7. Tangentially related is Elly Danica's full length text entitled, Don't, A Woman's Word (1988). This text is noteworthy since it is a type of hybrid between first person narratives and "true" journal form. While I define journals as texts which are written continuously over time about past, future, and presently occurring events and feelings, Danica's text may be thought of as a memoir or as based upon a type of journal. It seems that Danica sat down and wrote in entirety a text primarily about past experiences. Her numbered entries suggest a journal form. This text is a powerful, exhausting account of Elly's childhood when she was repeatedly raped, pimped, beaten, and photographed by her pornographer/pimp father. While beyond the narrow limitations of this study, Danica's brave account deserves further research, especially the dialectic of survivor/live self to defeated/dead self.

8. There are numerous ethical concerns when considering unpublished journal writings as texts for analysis: How is the writer's identity protected? Can the journal be used "as is" or do names of living persons need to be changed? How does the researcher "get around" the legal restrictions of not being able to use the real names of perpetrators that are still living? When does discussion and analysis become distortion and, hence, problematic for the integrity of the survivor's story? How can journal excerpts be presented without setting up a traumatic and, possibly, abusive situation for the reader of such materials? No doubt there are a score of other relevant

questions and issues which ought to be addressed before submitting such painfully personal materials as survivor's unpublished journal writings to the examination of academicians.

9. A review of literature on theory and criticism regarding the process of journaling reflects several different emphases. Frequently, journals are used in classrooms as "dialogue journals" and "learning logs" in order to improve student self-understanding and performance across the disciplines (see, e.g., Carr; Fulwiler). In this case, keeping a journal supplements pedagogical understanding. Analysis of journal and diary writing is also used to provide insight into the creativity and psychology of a given writer (see, e.g., DeSalvo; Nin; Sarton; Woolf) and/or may be viewed as a unique reflexive fiction strategy (see, e.g., Abbott). Also, journaling has therapeutic uses (see, e.g., Baker; Baldwin; Bass and Davis; Hays; Rainer). Journal writing is a way to confront problems and issues, release creativity, and develop a rich inner life. Finally, journal writing is a unique form of self-help therapy. In keeping with this emphasis Hazelden educational materials, a company providing twelve step information and self-help materials, sells several journals including WomanWords, a blank journal and JourneyNotes, a book about writing for recovery and spiritual growth (Solly and Lloyd).

10. See, e.g., Portwood, viii.

11. The purpose and value of "owning" is as a series of stepping stones into recovery. Rehearsal and owning form an interdependent relationship. The more a survivor rehearses and role takes alternate, affirming ways of thinking, being, and communicating the more she was can claim the abuse as hers. When the survivor continues to break silence about the abuse, she begins to own her past. Rehearsal is a mode of conceptualizing, accessing, and, finally, claiming ownership of the primary relationship between survivor

and her inner selves. This concept of "owning" was developed between Carol E. Barringer and myself during several long phone conversations between September 1989 and February 1990.

12. Within the discipline of performance studies, many scholars, critics, and practitioners rely on performance metaphors and/or analogues to illuminate specific texts. This focus is not inclusive. Performance studies are defined as including "current research in anthropology and ethnography" and "the usual fields of interpretation and theatre" (Bacon). The word "text" incorporates written, visual, electronic, and oral productions of meaning and existence (Chesebro, 3-5).

13. See, e.g., Long, Hudson, and Jeffrey, 66-76; Lee and Gura, 178-179; Maclay and Sloan, 15-24; Yordon, 310-312.

14. See, e.g., Long, Hudson, and Jeffrey, 68.

15. See, e.g., Maclay and Sloan, 17. They provide a concise discussion of the differences between meditation and communication, 15-18.

16. While scholars may vary textual approaches, typically textbooks in performance studies rely on some type of dramatistic framework. See, e.g., Lee and Gura; Long, Hudson, and Jeffrey; Maclay and Sloan; and Yordon.

17. For a brief overview of the history and use of the dramatistic model in performance see, e.g., Gudas, 589-627.

18. See, Donaforte, 1.

19. See, Donaforte, 14.

20. See, Donaforte, 32.

21. See, Donaforte, 78-79.

22. See, Donaforte, 17.

23. See, Donaforte, 18.

24. See, Donaforte, 69.

25. See, Donaforte, 92.

26. See, Donaforte, 46.

27. See, Donaforte, 50.

28. See, Sisk and Hoffman, 67.

29. See, Sisk and Hoffman, 65.

30. See, Sisk and Hoffman, 86.

31. See, Portwood, Gorcey and Sanders, 73.

32. Rothstein's speaker also addresses a fearful part of her inner self.

33. See, Donaforte, 41-42.

34. See, Donaforte, 42.

35. See, Donaforte, 47. Also, Comforter as implied audience on pp. 43-44, 77, 93, 95-96.

36. See, Donaforte, 32-34.

37. See, Donaforte, 44. Also, 47 for an entry dealing with conflict between selves and Comforter as implied audience in pp. 55, 61.

38. See, Donaforte, 51.

39. See, Donaforte, 51-52. Also, speaker addresses Permissa and Ellen as implied audience on pp. 93, 95.

40. See, Donaforte, 57.

41. See, Donaforte, 77.

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